



St. Ignatius of Loyola

## **Ignatian year encourages Christians to see all things new in Christ**

The Ignatian year themed “to see all things new in Christ” begins from May 2021 to July 2022. During this period, the Society of Jesus encourages Christians on the path of transformation and conversion inspired by the example of St. Ignatius of Loyola.

**By Fr. Benedict Mayaki, SJ**

Starting from May 2021 until the end of July 2022, the Society of Jesus celebrates the Ignatian year to remember the life of St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits.

The year will open on Thursday, 20 May which commemorates the 500th anniversary of St. Ignatius’s injury during the Battle of Pamplona on 20 May 1521. While defending the citadel of Pamplona against French forces, St. Ignatius was seriously injured after being struck by a canon ball. This led to a

long period of convalescence which began his conversion and subsequent transformation from soldier to saint.

During this year themed “to see all things new in Christ”, the Jesuits will also mark the 400th anniversary of the canonization of St. Ignatius and St. Francis Xavier on 12 March 2022. The Ignatian year will conclude on 31 July 2022 – the Feast of St. Ignatius.

The solemn opening Mass for the Ignatian year takes in Pamplona, Spain on Thursday, 20 May 2021.

### **Seeing all things new**

Guided by the theme of the Ignatian year, the Society of Jesus hopes to encourage everyone to draw inspiration from the example of St. Ignatius and his inner struggle to conversion which led him to a close familiarity with God. This familiarity, in turn, led him to find God in all things and to see all things new in Christ.

“The Ignatian year is, first of all, to be considered from a spiritual perspective. It gives us the opportunity to highlight one of the four apostolic preferences of the Society of Jesus which is to show the way to God. For that, St. Ignatius gave us an extraordinary heritage of the Spiritual Exercises and also spiritual discernment,” explained Fr. Pierre Belanger SJ.

“During this year, there will be several resources all over the world to better know the Spiritual Exercises – a way to help us find true liberty in our lives; and also the way of discernment – knowing how to consider the future, and justice in the face of different options placed before us. It is thus, an opportunity to know and deepen Ignatian spirituality.”

The Ignatian year “is a call to allow the Lord to work on our conversion,” said Fr. Arturo Sosa SJ, Superior General of the Jesuits. “We ask for the grace to be renewed by the Lord. We wish to discover a new apostolic enthusiasm inside

ourselves, a new life, new ways to follow the Lord. That is why we have chosen as our theme for the year: to see all things new in Christ.”

### **Online prayer initiative**

As part of the activities lined up to kick off the Ignatian year, the Jesuits are organizing an online live prayer initiative on 23 May at 8: 00 pm (Rome time), under the theme: “Pilgrims with Ignatius.”

The different provinces of the Society of Jesus around the world are also organizing several initiatives adapted to their contexts to celebrate the Ignatian year.